

Public Administration Program

Applied Research Projects

Texas State University

Year 2007

A Handbook of Community Services for
Parents in Texas

Andreana Denise Ledesma
Texas State University-San Marcos, Dept. of Political Science,
Public Administration, LAndreana@aol.com

A Handbook of

Community

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for

Parents in Texas



Anderana Ledesma
Texas State University, San Marcos

Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide parents with a list of agencies/organizations that offer services throughout the state of Texas. The handbook includes details about each agency/organization, including contact information such as Web site addresses and toll-free telephone numbers, if available.

Service providers can also use the handbook to further support their clients by providing copies of the handbook to their clients, and/or maintaining a master copy in waiting areas frequented by parents.

For information about services not listed in this handbook, please call **2-1-1**. This phone number connects callers with information and referrals about services in your local community 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. (If calling outside of Texas or if you experience technical difficulties when dialing 2-1-1, an alternate toll-free number is **1-877-541-7905**.)

This handbook was submitted by Andreana D. Ledesma to the Department of Political Science at Texas State University – San Marcos in partial fulfillment for the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Public Administration, and is available online at eCommons@TxState (<http://ecommons.txstate.edu/arp/264>).

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Child Care

2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember phone number connecting callers with services in their community, including **child care**. Callers can speak with a trained resource specialist who can provide information and referrals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. Information can be provided in over 90 different languages. (An alternate toll-free number is **1-877-541-7905**.)

211Texas.org is a Web site that contains comprehensive information about services in Texas. Individuals can search by service need (e.g., **child care**) or program/agency name, and city, ZIP code, or county. For more information, visit **www.211texas.org**.



The **Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)** provides **child care** assistance as a support service for parents who are low-income or transitioning off of public assistance if they work, attend school, or participate in job training. To locate the nearest TWC center, call **2-1-1** or for more information, visit **www.twc.state.tx.us/dirs/wdas/wdamap.html**.

The **Head Start Program** provides free comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children three to five years of age and families, with a special focus on helping **preschoolers** develop the early reading and math skills they need to be successful in school. To search for the nearest Head Start Program by city:

- call toll-free **1-866-282-7780**,
- visit **www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/hsweb/index.jsp**, or
- look up “**Head Start**” in your local telephone book.

Domestic Violence – Counseling

Counseling services can offer a source of support for parents who are victims of domestic violence. Participants have the opportunity to address various issues related to domestic violence, such as self-esteem, depression, relationship problems, stress, anger management, and coping skills.



The **National Domestic Violence Hotline** is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for victims and anyone calling on their behalf to provide crisis intervention, safety planning, information, and referrals to agencies in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Assistance is available in English and Spanish with access to more than 140 languages through interpreter services. For more information, call toll-free **1-800-799-SAFE (1-800-799-7233)**. There is also a TTY line at 1-800-787-3224 for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired.

The **Texas Council on Family Violence** maintains a directory of Texas programs for domestic violence victims, including **counseling**. Users can search by city, county, or program (e.g., **counseling**). For more information, call toll-free **1-800-525-1978** or visit **www.tcfv.org/service_providers/search_sd.php**. There is also a TTY line at 1-888-239-9035 for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired.

2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember phone number connecting callers with services in their community, including **counseling** for victims of domestic violence. Callers can speak with a trained resource specialist who can provide information and referrals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. Information can be provided in over 90 different languages. (An alternate toll-free number is **1-877-541-7905**.)

211Texas.org is a Web site that contains comprehensive information about services in Texas. Individuals can search by service need (e.g., **counseling**) or program/agency name, and city, ZIP code, or county. For more information, visit **www.211texas.org**.

Domestic Violence - Crisis Helpline

The **National Domestic Violence Hotline** is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for victims and anyone calling on their behalf to provide **crisis** intervention, safety planning, information, and referrals to agencies in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Assistance is available in English and Spanish with access to more than 140 languages through interpreter services. For more information, call toll-free **1-800-799-SAFE** (1-800-799-7233). There is also a TTY line at 1-800-787-3224 for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired.



Domestic Violence - Emergency Shelter

Emergency shelters provide a sanctuary for victims of domestic violence and their children. Services include immediate shelter, food, and clothing, as well as ongoing counseling services and legal assistance to support parents as they transition out of the shelter.

The **National Domestic Violence Hotline** is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for victims and anyone calling on their behalf to provide crisis intervention, **safety** planning, information, and referrals to agencies in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Assistance is available in English and Spanish with access to more than 140 languages through interpreter services. For more information, call toll-free **1-800-799-SAFE** (1-800-799-7233). There is also a TTY line at 1-800-787-3224 for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired.



The **Texas Council on Family Violence** maintains a directory of Texas programs for domestic violence victims, including **emergency shelter**. Users can search by city, county, or program (e.g., **shelter**). For more information, call toll-free **1-800-525-1978** or visit **www.tcfv.org/service_providers/search_sd.php**. There is also a TTY line at 1-888-239-9035 for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired.

2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember phone number connecting callers with services in their community, including **emergency shelter** for victims of domestic violence. Callers can speak with a trained resource specialist who can provide information and referrals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. Information can be provided in over 90 different languages. (An alternate toll-free number is **1-877-541-7905**.)

211Texas.org is a Web site that contains comprehensive information about services in Texas. Individuals can search by service need (e.g., **shelter**) or program/agency name, and city, ZIP code, or county. For more information, visit **www.211texas.org**.

The **Family Violence Program** maintains a comprehensive list of family violence **shelters** in Texas by city. For more information, visit **www.hhsc.state.tx.us/programs/familyviolence/shelters.html**.

Domestic Violence - Legal Advocacy

Legal advocacy services can benefit parents affected by domestic violence. Services may include assistance navigating through the legal system, including informing victims of their legal rights, obtaining requests for separation orders, divorce processing, child custody and visitation, protective orders, as well as the provision of information regarding social service agencies.

The **National Domestic Violence Hotline** is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for victims and anyone calling on their behalf to provide crisis intervention, safety planning, **information and referrals** to agencies in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Assistance is available in English and Spanish with access to more than 140 languages through interpreter services. For more information, call toll-free **1-800-799-SAFE** (1-800-799-7233). There is also a TTY line at 1-800-787-3224 for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired.

TexasLawHelp is a one-stop Web site where low-income Texans can get information about their legal rights and find out about free **legal assistance** in their area. Some organizations may make exceptions for people experiencing domestic violence, regardless of income status. Information is available in Spanish and Vietnamese. For more information, visit **www.texaslawhelp.org**.

The **Texas Council on Family Violence** maintains a directory of Texas programs for domestic violence victims, including **legal services**. Users can search by city, county, or program (e.g., legal). For more information, call toll-free **1-800-525-1978** or visit **www.tcfv.org/service_providers/search_sd.php**. There is also a TTY line at 1-888-239-9035 for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired.

2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember phone number connecting callers with services in their community, including **legal services**. Callers can speak with a trained resource specialist who can provide information and referrals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. Information can be provided in over 90 different languages. (An alternate toll-free number is **1-877-541-7905**.)

211Texas.org is a Web site that contains comprehensive information about services in Texas. Individuals can search by service need (e.g., **legal**) or program/agency name, and city, ZIP code, or county. For more information, visit **www.211texas.org**.

Employment Assistance

Employment assistance can include information on career development opportunities, interviewing techniques, job search programs and training, as well as unemployment benefits.

The **Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)** provides **job placement services**, including access to thousands of job postings, job search resources and training programs, as well as assistance with exploring career options, resume and application preparation, career development, and more. For more information, visit www.twc.state.tx.us/dirs/wdas/wdamap.html or call **2-1-1** to locate the nearest TWC center.

2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember phone number connecting callers with services in their community, including **employment services**. Callers can speak with a trained resource specialist who can provide information and referrals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. Information can be provided in over 90 different languages. (An alternate toll-free number is **1-877-541-7905**.)

211Texas.org is a Web site that contains comprehensive information about services in Texas. Individuals can search by service need (e.g., **employment**) or program/agency name, and city, ZIP code, or county. For more information, visit www.211texas.org.

Food Assistance

2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember phone number connecting callers with services in their community and state benefits, including **food assistance**. Callers can speak with a trained resource specialist who can provide information and referrals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. Information can be provided in over 90 different languages. Callers also have the option of applying for benefits or checking the status of an application for benefits. This service is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. (An alternate toll-free number is **1-877-541-7905**.)

211Texas.org is a Web site that contains comprehensive information about services in Texas. Individuals can search by service need (e.g., **food**) or program/agency name, and city, ZIP code, or county. For more information, visit www.211texas.org.

Food Assistance (continued)

The **Food Stamp Program** helps individuals and families with little or no income buy the **food** they need for good health. Benefits are distributed each month through a Lone Star Card – an electronic debit card that is used like a credit card at the cash register when making food purchases. For more information or to start an application, call **2-1-1** and select option **2** or visit www.yourtexasbenefits.com.



The **National School Lunch/School Breakfast Program** provides free and very reduced-price **lunch and breakfast** during the school day to low- and moderate-income children. For more information or to request an application, contact your child's school office.

The **Summer Food Program** provides free, **nutritious meals and snacks** during the summer when school is not in session. The meals are usually provided along with educational or recreational activities. To eat, children just need to show up at a participating meal site. For more information, call **2-1-1** or visit www.hhsc.state.tx.us/programs/snp/summerfood.

The **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** program provides temporary financial and medical assistance to needy dependent children under age 18 and the parents or relatives with whom they are living. Eligible TANF households receive monthly benefits to help pay for **food**, shelter, utilities and other basic needs. Emergency aid is also available for families facing financial crisis. For more information or to start an application, call **2-1-1** and select option **2** or visit www.yourtexasbenefits.com.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is a nutrition program that helps pregnant women, new mothers, and young children eat well, learn about nutrition, and stay healthy. Nutrition education and counseling, **nutritious foods**, and help accessing health care are provided at no cost to low-income women, infants, and children under the age of five. WIC foods include iron-fortified infant formula and infant cereal, iron-fortified adult cereal, vitamin C-rich fruit and vegetable juice, milk, eggs, cheese, beans, and peanut butter. Different food packages are issued to different clients. For example, mothers who are totally breastfeeding their babies without formula are issued tuna and carrots in addition to other foods. For information on how to apply or to obtain the telephone number and address of the nearest WIC clinic, call toll-free **1-800-WIC-FOR-U** (1-800-942-3678) Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Health Care Assistance

The **Texas Women's Health Program** provides uninsured, low-income women with gynecological exams; health screenings for diabetes, sexually transmitted diseases, high blood pressure, and breast and cervical cancers; assessment of health risk factors, such as smoking, obesity, and exercise; counseling and education on birth control methods, including the health benefits of abstinence; and birth control. For more information, call toll-free **1-866-993-9972** or **2-1-1**, or visit www.hhsc.state.tx.us/WomensHealth/InformationforClients.html.

Applications are also available at Women, Infants and Children (WIC) offices. Call toll-free 1-800-942-3678 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. to obtain the telephone number and address of the nearest WIC clinic.

The **Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)** provides health insurance coverage for low-income Texas children from birth through age 18 who do not qualify for Medicaid. Benefits include regular checkups, vision and dental services, immunizations, and prescription drugs. Families with CHIP may pay enrollment fees and co-payments for certain services. For more information or to start an application, call toll-free **1-877-KIDS-NOW** (1-877-543-7669) Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., or visit www.CHIPmedicaid.org. There is also a TTY line at 1-800-735-2988 for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired.

Medicaid provides **health care** services for low-income children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Medicaid pays for doctor's visits, lab and x-ray charges, hospital and nursing home care, eyeglasses, hearing aids, dental, maternity, and other healthcare services. For more information or to start an application, call **2-1-1** and select option **2** or visit www.yourtexasbenefits.com.

Community Health Centers exist in many parts of Texas. These health centers provide care to individuals without health insurance and have sliding fee scales based on an individual's income. You pay what you can afford, based on your income. Health centers provide check-ups when you are well, treatment when you are sick, complete care when you are pregnant, immunizations and well-child care for your children, dental care, and prescription drugs. For the nearest community health center, call toll-free **1-800-ASK-HRSA** (1-800-275-4772) or visit www.ask.hrsa.gov/pc.

The **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** program provides temporary financial and **medical assistance** to needy dependent children under age 18 and the parents or relatives with whom they are living. Eligible TANF households receive monthly benefits to help pay for food, shelter, utilities and other basic needs. Emergency aid is also available for families facing financial crisis. For more information or to start an application, call **2-1-1** and select option **2** or visit www.yourtexasbenefits.com.

Health Care Assistance (continued)

Planned Parenthood health centers offer high-quality sexual and reproductive **health care**, including family planning, gynecological care, sexually transmitted disease testing and treatment, and pregnancy testing. For more information or to locate the nearest office, call toll-free **1-800-230-PLAN** (1-800-230-7526) or visit **www.plannedparenthood.org**.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is a nutrition program that helps pregnant women, new mothers, and young children eat well, learn about nutrition, and stay healthy. Nutrition education and counseling, nutritious foods, and help accessing **health care** are provided at no cost to low-income women, infants, and children under the age of five. For information on how to apply or to obtain the telephone number and address of the nearest WIC clinic, call toll-free **1-800-WIC-FOR-U** (1-800-942-3678) Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember phone number connecting callers with services in their community, including **health care** services. Callers can speak with a trained resource specialist who can provide information and referrals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. Information can be provided in over 90 different languages. (An alternate toll-free number is **1-877-541-7905**.)

211Texas.org is a Web site that contains comprehensive information about services in Texas. Individuals can search by service need (e.g., **health care**) or program/agency name, and city, ZIP code, or county. For more information, visit **www.211texas.org**.

Parenting Skills/Support

Childhelp® runs a national 24-hour hotline for parents who need help or **parenting** advice. Hotline counselors can help callers with their children's behavior problems, including identifying situations that trigger the problem behavior and helping parents choose ways to respond. Hotline counselors can help parents understand what normal behavior is at different stages of the child's development, and can also provide non-judgmental emotional support. All calls are confidential and anonymous. Through interpreters, communication is possible in 140 languages. For more information, call toll-free **1-800-4-A-CHILD** (1-800-422-4453), or visit **www.childhelp.org/get_help/what-to-expect-when-calling/what-the-hotline-can-do**.



Parenting Skills/Support (continued)

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is a **parent education and family support** program serving families throughout pregnancy until their child enters kindergarten. Parents are supported by PAT-certified parent educators trained to translate scientific information on early brain development into specific *when, what, how, and why* advice for families. By understanding what to expect during each stage of development, parents can easily capture the teachable moments in everyday life to enhance their child's language development, intellectual growth, social development and motor skills. For more information or for the nearest program, call toll-free **1-866-PAT4YOU** (1-866-728-4968) or visit **www.parentsasteachers.org/site/pp.asp?c=ekIRLcMZJxE&b=272119**.

Parents Anonymous is a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening families and supporting safe and nurturing homes for all children. Parents find a caring, supportive environment where they can learn new **parenting** strategies and create long lasting positive changes in their families. The program includes weekly, free of charge **parent support** group meetings and family education. Parents can join a group at any time and attend as long as they wish. For more information:

- call **1-909-621-6184** and select option **1** (long distance charges may apply),
- visit **www.parentsanonymous.org/pahtml/parBene.html**, or
- look up “Parents Anonymous” in your local telephone book.

Every Person Influences Children (EPIC) is a national non-profit organization dedicated to helping parents raise responsible and academically successful children. EPIC provides parents with **support** and advice in handling some of the stresses associated with **parenting**. For more information, visit **www.epicforchildren.org/parents.cfm**.

2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember phone number connecting callers with services in their community, including **parenting information**. Callers can speak with a trained resource specialist who can provide information and referrals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. Information can be provided in over 90 different languages. (An alternate toll-free number is **1-877-541-7905**.)

211Texas.org is a Web site that contains comprehensive information about services in Texas. Individuals can search by service need (e.g., **parenting**) or program/agency name, and city, ZIP code, or county. For more information, visit **www.211texas.org**.

Parenting Skills/Support (continued)

Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) is a statewide program for families with children, birth to three, with disabilities and developmental delays. ECI supports families to help their children reach their potential through developmental services. Services are provided by a variety of local agencies and organizations across Texas. For more information about ECI, visit www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis/publications/directory2007.pdf or call the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services Inquiries Line at **1-800-628-5115**. Information is provided in English and Spanish. Other languages can be accommodated through interpreters. The phone line is answered Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Voice mail is in operation during evenings and on weekends.

The **Head Start Program** provides free comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children three to five years of age and families, with a special focus on helping **preschoolers** develop the early reading and math skills they need to be successful in school. To search for the nearest Head Start Program by city:

- call toll-free **1-866-282-7780**,
- visit www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/hsweb/index.jsp, or
- look up “**Head Start**” in your local telephone book.

Substance Abuse - Counseling/Treatment

The **National Alcohol and Substance Abuse Information Center** is a drug and alcohol addiction treatment Web site, call center, and hotline providing fast, accurate information and immediate assistance for alcoholism, substance abuse, detox, drug addiction, treatment, rehab, and chemical dependency. Information and services are provided at absolutely no charge 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For more information, call toll-free **1-800-784-6776** or visit www.addictioncareoptions.com.

2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember phone number connecting callers with services in their community, including **counseling and treatment** for substance abuse. Callers can speak with a trained resource specialist who can provide information and referrals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. Information can be provided in over 90 different languages. (An alternate toll-free number is **1-877-541-7905**.)

211Texas.org is a Web site that contains comprehensive information about services in Texas. Individuals can search by service need (e.g., **substance abuse**) or program/agency name, and city, ZIP code, or county. For more information, visit www.211texas.org.

Substance Abuse - Self-help/Support Groups

The **National Alcohol and Substance Abuse Information Center** is a drug and alcohol addiction treatment Web site, call center, and hotline providing fast, accurate information and immediate assistance for alcoholism, substance abuse, detox, drug addiction, treatment, rehab, and chemical dependency. Information and services are provided at absolutely no charge 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For more information, call toll-free **1-800-784-6776** or visit **www.addictioncareoptions.com**.

Al-Anon offers hope and help to families and friends of alcoholics. Members meet others who share their feelings and frustrations in order to solve their common problems. There are no dues or fees for membership. For more information, call toll-free **1-888-4AL-ANON** (1-888-425-2666) or visit **www.al-anon.alateen.org**.

2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember phone number connecting callers with services in their community, including **substance abuse support**. Callers can speak with a trained resource specialist who can provide information and referrals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. Information can be provided in over 90 different languages. (An alternate toll-free number is **1-877-541-7905**.)

211Texas.org is a Web site that contains comprehensive information about services in Texas. Individuals can search by service need (e.g., **substance abuse**) or program/agency name, and city, ZIP code, or county. For more information, visit **www.211texas.org**.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is a fellowship of men and women who share their experiences, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership. The primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics achieve sobriety. For more information visit **www.aa.org/en_information_aa.cfm?PageID=11**. To find a local meeting:

- visit **www.aa.org/en_find_meeting.cfm?PageID=29**, or
- look up “Alcoholics Anonymous” in your local telephone book.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) is a fellowship of men and women who share their experiences, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from drug addiction. NA has only one mission: to provide an environment in which addicts can help one another stop using drugs and find a new way to live. There are no dues or fees for NA membership. For more information or to find a local meeting:

- call **1-818-773-9999** extension **771** Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. (long distance charges may apply),
- visit **www.na.org/basic.htm**, or
- look up “Narcotics Anonymous” in your local telephone book.

Utility Bill Assistance

2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember phone number connecting callers with services in their community, including help with **utility bills**. Callers can speak with a trained resource specialist who can provide information and referrals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. Information can be provided in over 90 different languages. (An alternate toll-free number is **1-877-541-7905**.)

211Texas.org is a Web site that contains comprehensive information about services in Texas. Individuals can search by service need (e.g., **bill payment**) or program/agency name, and city, ZIP code, or county. For more information, visit www.211texas.org.



The **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)** is a federally funded program that helps low-income households with their home energy bills. Services include **bill payment assistance**, energy crisis assistance, and weatherization and energy-related home repairs. For more information or to find the nearest office, call toll-free **1-877-399-8939** or visit www.tdhca.state.tx.us/ea/docs/07-CEAPSubgrants.pdf.

Lifeline offers a monthly discount up to over \$15 on local telephone service and waives the monthly customer line charge. **Link Up** offers up to 50% discount on line connection charges. Additional discounts may apply for individuals living on tribal lands. Individuals with an income at or below 150% of the federal poverty level or who receive benefits from Food Stamps, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Federal Public Housing/Section 8, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribally Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Head Start (income qualified customers only), or National School Lunch Program (free lunch program only) may qualify. For more information or to sign up, call the Texas Lite-Up Program toll-free at **1-866-454-8387** or visit www.att.com/lifeline.